

Submission Details

Submitter

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Note	

In relation to application

Application Number	PT8MN83
Applicant Name	Monaghan County Council
Development Address	Roosky and Tirkeenán, Monaghan Town

Please ensure that no part of the new Civic Offices has a name that contains the word Farney.

Farney comprises of one-fifth of the present-day county of Monaghan. Farney should only really be used in areas around Carrickmacross, Inniskeen, Killany, Donaghmoyne, Toome, Magheracloone and Corduff. Oriel should be used for the rest of the county, especially in Monaghan town.

There was a hotel called the Oriel Hotel that stood on the site of the present-day Diamond Shopping Centre in the Diamond. This building is not far from the pedestrian entrance to the Civic Offices. There was a nursing home on the St. Davnet's campus called Oriel House.

I have attached a photo of the Oriel Hotel and the site after the hotel was demolished. I have also attached a photo of the building in St. Davnet's that was previously known as Oriel House.

Please see attached article, Farney is just part of Oriel, from 2004 that was written by historian Seamus Mc Cluskey. This is an opportune time to acknowledge the 'Oriel' name as two previous historical buildings revered it in the past and the roadway at the Civic Offices is right in the centre of the Oriel Kingdom

Eoin Mac



Farney is just a part of Oriel

Should we label Monaghan the Farney County or the Oriel County? Seamus McCluskey has a look at the origin of both names.

In GAA circles most Irish counties have a nick-name which is regularly used by their followers at games, and even more often by the media in the 'lead up' and the reporting of these same games, if we are to go by the outpourings from the legions of 'Sports Scribes' over the past number of years.

Here in Ulster, Fermanagh teams are regularly called 'the Erne-siders', Cavan - the Breifne men, Antrim - the Glensmen, Armagh - the men from the Orchard county, Tyrone - the O'Neill county, etc. etc., while outside the province we hear repeatedly of the 'Wee County', the Model County, the Premier County, the Faithful County, the Tribesmen, the Decies, the Banner, Royal Meath, and a host of others. However, when it comes to Monaghan we have a clash of names, with 'Farney' and 'Oriel' the two most frequently used.

It is remarkable, however, that just one of these is one-hundred-per-cent correct, as 'Farney' comprises just one-fifth of the present county of Monaghan, while 'Oriel' covers the entire county, and was originally the centre of a once much larger kingdom in mid-Ulster. We always like to think of ourselves as Ulstermen, and why shouldn't we, as this is the heart of Ulster and has always contributed to the political and sporting history of this northern province. Kings of Oriel even had their headquarters in Donaghmoynne, which is in Farney, so 'Farney-folk' should have little difficulty in using 'Oriel' in preference to 'Farney'.

Prior to the coming of the English, the present Co. Monaghan was divided into four or five 'Tuatha'. These were small kingdoms, and there were approximately two hundred of them in all throughout the country. The Monaghan 'tautha' had their own rulers, with four of them being governed by the great McMahon clan, while the fifth and smallest of the 'Tuatha' lay to the north of the county, was called 'Triucha Chead a' Chladaigh', and contained the present parishes of Donagh and Errigal Truagh. This latter 'tuath' was controlled by the mighty MacKenna clan, who often found themselves at war with the O'Neills on their northern flank or against the stronger McMahons on their southern flank. They were also often allies of one of these two great Ulster families in their struggle with the other. Even more often they found themselves at logger heads with the marauding foreigners, who spoke a different language and professed a different religion.

The late Fr. Peadar Livingstone of Castleblayney, one of Co. Monaghan's finest historians writing in his truly magnificent and comprehensive history "The Monaghan Story" (published by the Clogher historical Society in Enniskillen in 1980), wrote:-

"As the sixteenth century opened, it could be argued that there were not one but three MacMahon kingdoms in Monaghan. This situation persisted throughout the century. The leaders of the three branches - Monaghan, Dartrey and Farney - were virtually independent of one another. A MacMahon chieftain continued to be elected throughout the century, but it is doubtful if the title was anything more than an honour".

When the country was finally conquered and the Irish had submitted to English rule, the victors imposed their authority on the entire province. They divided the country up into 'shire' land, which they found more convenient to control, and thus emerged the counties which we know today, and which, by a strange twist, were quickly adopted by the native Irish, and which they now support so vigorously in every aspect of political and sporting life. The five 'tuatha' of Monaghan became the five baronies - Farney in the extreme south, Dartrey in the west, Cremorne in the east, Monaghan in the north-centre, and Truagh in the extreme North. That is how it still exists, so it can be seen that the term 'Farney' covers only the extreme south of the county, containing the current Carrickmacross, Inniskeen, Killanny, Donaghmoynne, Toome, Magheraclone and Corduff GAA clubs.

Oriel, on the other hand, was a much larger and older kingdom, set up originally when the ancient province of Ulster was invaded and then divided up into three parts by the 'Three Collas'. It first contained most of the present county of Monaghan survived as its main part and 'hard core' right down

through the ages. Fr. Livingstone wrote in his 'Monaghan Story'.

"This Oriel (i.e. McMahon territory) was never to become as extensive as the kingdom had been under the O'Carrolls. It did not include Louth and its sway seldom reached far into either Fermanagh or Tyrone".

Thus, Monaghan 'remained' Oriel, and never became part of any other major land division. The entire county, as is currently constituted, probably should never even have been called 'Monaghan' in the first place, and would have been much more correctly named 'Oriel'. Even the ascendancy classes recognised this fact - Seymour Leslie in the history of the Leslies of Glaslough, titled his book 'Glaslough in Oriel'. It is not difficult then to see that this county of ours is really Oriel, and that we are all 'Oriel-men' and 'Oriel-women'.

The question will then surely be asked as to why Farney is so often used when referring to Co. Monaghan, particularly in sporting circles. The answer is quite simple and goes back to the very foundation of the GAA within the county. When the Central Council first gave instructions for each county to form its own County Board, it was the Gaels of the deep-South of the county who responded so magnificently. On the 27th December 1887, their first ever meeting took place in the then O'Neill's Hotel on Main Street in Carrickmacross and a County Board was duly formed. It was remarkable, however, that there was not a single representative whatsoever present from either mid-Monaghan or north-Monaghan, and the entire proceedings were conducted by representatives from the existing 'clubs' in the barony of Farney.

This is easily gleaned from the first 'officer-board' set up on that auspicious occasion, which was as follows:-

Rev. W. McKenna of Carrickmacross was elected as President

Rev. J. McCarney, Donaghmoynce, was elected as Vice-President.

P. Lee, Carrickmacross, was elected as Chairman (according to the 'Dundalk Democrat' he was elected as Treasurer, but this was incorrect).

Owen Cahill, Carrickmacross, was elected as Secretary.

James Daly, ex-MP, was elected as Treasurer (this is verified in the 'Louth Annual' of 1905 - 06)

A committee was also elected and this consisted of:-

Mr. Patrick Finnegan, Drummond; Mr. P. O'Toal, Inniskeen; Mr. B. Lambe, Carrickmacross; Mr. P. Duffy, Carrickmacross; Mr. H. Fox, Carrickmacross; Mr. P. Clarke, Donaghmoynce; Mr. J. McGrodir, Kilmurry; and Mr. T. Fealey, Donaghmoynce.

Whether or not the mid and northern sections of the county were 'deliberately' omitted from the gathering is open to conjecture, but a County Championship was hastily agreed upon, and initially only included teams from the extreme South (or Farney) end of the county. This was obviously later overruled by the governing Central Council as a northern presence was later evident when a team from Clones (the Red Hands) contested the first County Final (1888), but these lost to the Inniskeen Grattans, who, incidentally, went on to win the first ever Ulster Championship.

The fact that the first County Board and the first ever County Champions came from Farney was obviously the reason why our representatives were called the 'Farney men', and the name apparently stuck. It was however, very much 'pushed' by a certain journalist (who died in the early forties) in one of the Dublin daily newspapers, as his ancestors had originated in Farney, and he was particularly proud of his south-Monaghan roots. This was then the main reason why successive journalists took up the term and repeated it regularly when it came to reporting on a Monaghan game.

Today, the county is still very often referred to as 'Farney' by the sports media of Dublin and Belfast (the latter journalists in particular insist on using the term), but these people are not natives of Monaghan, do not live here, and know very little of our history. It has become very noticeable in recent times, however, that the local media, both radio and print, are reverting to the older and more correct term 'Oriel'. These are journalists who live here, and who have a much greater knowledge of Monaghan's proud history which, in turn, gives them the greater desire to be more correct when referring to our county teams.

In a way, when the term 'Farney' is used, it is being a bit unfair to the players from the clubs of the other four areas - Cremorne, Dartrey, Monaghan and Truagh - who strive so hard to earn recognition for themselves by being selected on our county teams, and these comprise the vast majority of clubs (23) within the county. It is particularly unfair to previous great players from the Castleblaney, Scotstown, Ballybay and Clontibret clubs, who have backboned our county teams down through the years, and who were never 'Farney men'. However, that is not to say that 'Farney' is incorrect, it simply means that 'Oriel' is the more correct.

However, as Monaghan people, we really don't mind what outsiders call us, or even what our own

supporters call us, just as long as they keep supporting our county teams - and just as long as those same county teams can get onto a winning trail!!!!

***Taken from Monaghan's Match
December 2004***

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